DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

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1. COUNTRY: ARGENTINA (AR)

2. REPORT NUMBER: [redacted] (b)(3):10 USC 424

3. TITLE: POLITICAL-REACTION TO USG POLICIES

4. PROJECT NUMBER: N/A

5. DATE OF INFORMATION: 780719

6. DATE OF REPORT: 780807 (b)(3):10 USC 424

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7. DATE & PLACE OF ACQUISITION: 780721, Buenos Aires

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9. ASSESSMENT: SOURCE ____, INFO [redacted]

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11. REQUEST EVALUATION ____, QPQ ____ (country)

12. PREPARING OFFICER: (b)(3):10 USC 424

13. APPROVING AUTHORITY:

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14. SOURCE: EMEMBASSY Memorandum of Conversation, 780719

15. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

DIRC YES ☐ NO ☒

16. SUMMARY:

~~(C)~~ This IR forwards an AMEMBASSY Memorandum of Conversation between Argentine Navy CINC Admiral Emilio Massera, and Foreign Correspondents (including USICA Information Officer). The Memorandum contains Admiral Massera's remarks on a variety of subjects and current political issues--notably reaction to USG policies.

REC'D 16 AUG '78

COMMENT: ~~(C)~~ The remarks are indicative of Admiral Massera's attitudes towards USG policies in general, as well as recent policy decisions (denial of Exim Bank loan for the Yacyreta project) impacting on the Government of Argentina.

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17. SUBJECT AND AREA CODES:

18. DISTRIBUTION BY ORIGINATOR:
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19. DOWNGRADING AND DECLASSIFICATION DATA:

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20. ENCLOSURES:

1. AMEMB Memorandum of conversation, 780719, 1 cy, 2 pgs ~~(C)~~

MICROFICHED BY [redacted]

21. This IR contains 1 pages.

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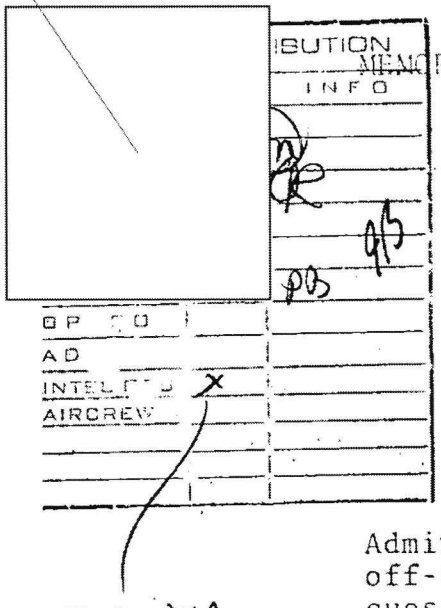

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Admiral Massera and Foreign Correspondents Association
John Corr, USICA Information Officer

PLACE: American Club, Buenos Aires

DATE: July 19, 1978

SUBJECT: Current Events

Admiral Massera charmed foreign correspondents in an off-the-record conversation. He said, in response to questions:

1. He wasn't overly disturbed about not getting the Ex-Im Bank Yacyretá loan. Financing can be obtained elsewhere. The real problem flowing from disagreements with the U.S. over human rights involves the lack of spare parts for the military.

2. He was for a concerted Argentine effort to return to democracy. Military people know how to order but not to govern. History shows that military governments create insoluble problems if they stay in office too long. He is willing to treat with politicians of ability in planning the restoration of democracy. The principal impediment to this restoration is military groups that fear the outcome of the ballot box, a fear he does not share because the Argentines have learned their lesson from recent history. The existence of past political movements (read Peronism) cannot be denied. (He made it clear that Peronists would be welcome to participate in the new democratic order. He shied away from criticizing Mrs. Peron.)

3. He said the U.S. had a right to its own policy in pressuring Latin America for a return to democracy; however, the results of the policy, e.g. Bolivia, may be worse than the situation it is designed to improve. Each nation should be permitted to find its own democratic solution without being pushed.

4. Last year the Navy asked that the detenidos list be published and he, himself, has asked the Junta to publish lists of those killed during the war on subversion.

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5. He was optimistic on the Beagle dispute, adding that just because Argentina is ready for war doesn't necessarily mean there will be a war.

6. There will be no big changes after August 1. Videla will be working under the authority of the Junta, which, at one time, even considered making the fourth man a prime minister, instead of a president.

7. As for his own political ambitions, he will have more to say beginning the afternoon of September 15, when he retires from active duty. What is necessary for a constructive political career is humility and a sincere desire to solve problems. He will wait in a relaxed manner to see what life has in store for him.

COMMENT: His hostility to Videla showed through when he discussed how much power Videla would have after August 1. To hear Massera tell it, Videla will not have very much power at all. He reminded his audience that, among Junta members, he was the most senior and that Videla had precedence because of traditional Argentine protocol. He appeared to show some anger when he said that "the other service" had denied there had been a request for publication of the names of those killed in the war against terrorists.

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